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FROM: GENEVA

TO: Secretary of State

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NIACT

FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM THE SECRETARY.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

LAST FRIDAY NIGHT I EXPRESSED IN MY MESSAGE TO YOU MY FEELING THAT GROMYKO'S POST-RECESS ATTITUDE DID NOT AUGUR WELL FOR ANY TANGIBLE PROGRESS AT THIS CONFERENCE. RESULTS OF YESTERDAY'S MEETINGS CONFIRM AND DEEPEN THIS IMPRESSION. AS YOU KNOW, AFTER A PROTRACTED PERIOD OF COORDINATION WITH OUR ALLIES WE PRESENTED YESTERDAY TO GROMYKO FIRST IN PRIVATE AND THEN IN PLENARY OUR COUNTER-PROPOSAL TO HIS UNACCEPTABLE ALL-GERMAN COMMITTEE. IN ESSENCE IT CONSTITUTES A CONTINUING IN BEING OF THIS CONFERENCE WITHOUT TIME LIMIT AS AT PRESENT CONSTITUTED WITH GERMAN ADVISERS AND PERMITTING APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTIES TO CARRY ON NEGOTIATIONS. THIS BASIC FORMULA IS AS FAR AS WE CAN GO. NEITHER THE WEST GERMANS NOR WE OURSELVES CAN CONTEMPLATE ACCORDING THE DDR THE TYPE OF RECOGNITION INHERENT IN THE SOVIET PROPOSAL. YESTERDAY BOLZ OF DDR FLATLY REJECTED OUR FORMULATION AND GROMYKO FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES DID THE SAME ALTHOUGH HE RESERVED HIS RIGHT TO COMMENT DEFINITELY AFTER FURTHER STUDY OF OUR PROPOSAL.

IN LIGHT GROMYKO'S CONTINUING INSISTENCE WE ACCEPT HIS ALL-GERMAN COMMITTEE CONCEPT AS CONDITION PRECEDENT EVEN TO ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION INTERIM BERLIN ARRANGEMENT WE FACE COMPLETE IMPASSE UNLESS GROMYKO ABANDONS HIS INSISTENCE ON LINK BETWEEN TWO PROBLEMS OR RECEDES FROM HIS ALL-GERMAN POSITION SUFFICIENTLY TO ACCEPT OUR FORMULATION OR SOME VARIANT OF IT WHICH WOULD STILL PRESERVE OUR ESSENTIALS ON THIS POINT.

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OF COURSE EVEN IF GROMYKO SHOULD SHIFT HIS POSITION ON THE ALL-GERMAN COMMITTEE THE NEGOTIATION ON BERLIN IS STILL IN A COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY POSITION. AS YOU WILL RECALL GROMYKO SINCE WE RETURNED TO GENEVA HAS REPEATEDLY REFUSED TO ANSWER OUR QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE POSITION OF OUR RIGHTS AT THE END OF ANY AGREED INTERIM PERIOD. HIS "FOREIGN MINISTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER" ASSURANCE TO ME AT MY LUNCH WITH HIM SATURDAY IS OF COURSE WORTHLESS. MOREOVER APART FROM THE QUESTION OF RIGHTS HE HAS GIVEN NO INDICATION OF AGREEING WITH ANY OF OUR OTHER BASIC POSITIONS ON BERLIN OTHER THAN THE CONTINUED ARMING OF OUR GARRISONS ONLY WITH CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.

UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES I PLAN IF YOU APPROVE TO SAY TO GROMYKO PRIVATELY IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO AFTER INFORMING COUVE, AND VON BRENTANO AND SELWYN THAT IN LIGHT HIS ATTITUDES END OF ROAD FOR THIS CONFERENCE NOW CLEARLY IN SIGHT AND ASK HIS VIEWS ON HOW WE CAN QUICKLY BRING STERILE MEETING TO ADJOURNMENT IN FASHION WHICH WOULD MINIMIZE RESULTANT AND INEVITABLE INCREASE IN TENSIONS. IF IN FACT SOVIET POSITION ADAMANT THEN I CONSIDER IT IN OUR INTERESTS TO MOVE RAPIDLY TO ORDERLY CONCLUSION. IN SELF-RESPECT WE CANNOT CONTINUE THIS PERFORMANCE INDEFINITELY AND TO DO SO FOR MORE THAN A FEW MORE DAYS IN CONFERENCE'S EXISTING POSTURE CARRIES IN MY JUDGMENT SERIOUS RISK THAT SOVIETS WILL INTERPRET OUR INEXHAUSTIBLE PATIENCE AS EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS AND ANXIETY. ON OTHER HAND IF GROMYKO IS MAINTAINING STONEWALL ATTITUDE FOR TACTICAL REASONS MY CONTEMPLATED APPROACH TO HIM WOULD I BELIEVE BE EQUALLY WELL DESIGNED TO PRODUCE SOME MOVEMENT ON HIS PART. GERMANS AND FRENCH I AM SURE WILL ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORT SUCH AN INITIATIVE BY ME. SELWYN WILL EXPRESS SERIOUS DOUBTS BUT I DO NOT THINK THAT IN THE END HE WILL OPPOSE IT.

I RECOGNIZE COMPLICATION IN TIMING OF MY PROPOSED APPROACH TO

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GROMYKO AND VICE PRESIDENT'S TRIP. HOWEVER IF WE DO NOT MAKE SOME SUCH MOVE PROMPTLY I BELIEVE GROMYKO IS LIKELY TO STALL HERE UNTIL AFTER VICE PRESIDENT'S DEPARTURE FROM RUSSIA IN BELIEF NIXON DESPITE PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO CONTRARY WILL IN FACT BEAR MESSAGE FROM YOU AFFECTING PROCEEDINGS HERE. MY APPROACH TO GROMYKO I BELIEVE COULD BE USEFULLY REINFORCED BY VICE PRESIDENT IN FIRST SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WITH KHRUSHCHEV IMPRESSING ON HIM FIRMNESS OF OUR POSITION AND SERIOUSNESS OF OUR INTENT TO WIND UP CONFERENCE IF PRESENT SOVIET POSITIONS AT GENEVA ARE IN FACT THEIR LAST WORDS.

NEEDLESS TO SAY IF THIS COMBINED APPROACH PRODUCES NO CHANGE IN PRESENT SOVIET POSITION WE WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RECESS OR TERMINATE THIS CONFERENCE WITH CONSEQUENT EFFECT ON PROSPECTS OF A SUMMIT CONFERENCE AND OVER BRITISH MISGIVINGS OR OBJECTION. SUBJECT OF SUMMIT INCIDENTALLY HAS NEVER COME UP HERE IN ANY DISCUSSIONS WITH GROMYKO.

I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR GUIDANCE.

FAITHFULLY YOURS, CHRIS.

HERTER

JAK

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